1: Childs M-S (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

606 being 'father', to the wife they are *ndatembo* (father-in-law). All relatives whom one considers as 'parents' are parents-in-law to one's spouse, and conversely, all whom one considers as one's 'children' are *ndatembo* (sons-in-law or daughters-in-law) to the spouse. To all these relatives-in-law is due the same pattern of respectful behaviour. Avoidance of seeing each other applies only between the *va ndatembo* of opposite sex. There is the additional prohibition that they may not eat in each other's presence. This avoidance is further extended to include one's *ndatembo* of the same sex, and also one's *nãwõ* (relatives-in-law of one's own generation). With the *nãwõ*, however, one is otherwise on free and easy terms.[1] The prohibition on eating does not apply to drinking beer or to other such casual refreshment, but only to 'hot food', i.e. to regular meals.

606 788 Avoidance of meeting (*oku liyuvuila kocipala*, lit. 'avoiding each other to the face') is especially difficult for the bride who comes to live in a village of her husband's people, a large proportion of the men of which may be *ndatembo* to her. The prohibition may be lifted by going through a simple ceremony in which each rubs a little oil on the other. The woman rubs oil on the breast, the face, and the right arm of her *ndatembo*, while he in turn rubs oil from the same dish on her breast and on the braids of her forehead. Avoidance of eating in each other's presence may be done away with after some months by sacrificing a chicken and feeding it ceremonially together with maize porridge to the *ndatembo* or *nãwõ* (throwing it into her mouth, mouthful by mouthful), with the attendance of the immediate family. It is especially important that these ceremonies be carried through with respect (*esumbilo*).

The avoidance of the name, whether of husband and wife, or of the parents-in-law, must be maintained: the names must not be pronounced. Many euphemisms are resorted to when it becomes 606 necessary to speak of or to these relatives-in-law. This is one 551 reason why the parents themselves take the name of their first-born, prefixing *Na*, 'mother of', and *Sa*, 'father of'. Thus the parents of *Kambõtiã* are known as *Nakambõtiã* and *Sakambõtiã*. This name may be pronounced. This is also probably one reason for extend-

[1] See the folk-tale in which the man who knows the speech of the red ants gives away his knowledge by laughing out while his sister-in-law is braiding his hair.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

V. ECONOMIC LIFE

The words "economic life" are here used with a wide connotation including nature lore, food supply, trade, transport, and industries; all these are combined to form a foundation for every aspect of the social life of the tribe. 182

The truth of this is realized if one pays attention to the rites connected with occupations. For the hunter there is special training, ritual, and a peculiar mode of burial. Final ceremonies in the initiation of a young blacksmith are associated with sacred acts such as sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of the tools with their blood. Even the simple occupation of pounding corn requires that the rock shall be dedicated to this purpose by sprinkling the blood of a chicken on the surface. Similarly, a clay pit has to be consecrated before the raw material may be taken for making pottery. A caravan journey is not merely a commercial undertaking; the accompanying medicine-man carries a wooden figure which he consults with regard to the route (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). 788 782 [787]

Division of labor according to sex is one of the most important principles involved in the economic life, more particularly in occupational groupings, which are strictly observed. Moreover, within any one activity, such as house-building, there are tasks for men only, while other parts of the work are performed exclusively by women or children. 462

The study of industries is of great importance when a comparison of Umbundu and adjacent cultures is being made. This is particularly true in the instance of wood-carving, an occupation yielding highly specialized products some of which are connected with religious belief and ritual. All artifacts are valuable as criteria of cultural contacts, though their reliability as evidence of trait diffusion naturally varies with their degree of complexity. Study of native industries in relation to European contacts illustrates a cultural process which may result in acceptance, rejection, or ingenious adaptation of new ideas. 322 177 [778]

That a study of the economic life of a tribe is not merely a recording of material processes and artifacts, is illustrated by observation of the treatment of cattle. This pastoral pursuit naturally falls under a heading "Domestic Animals," but the ideas associated with cattle, including funeral feasts, use of horns on graves, and the wrapping of the royal corpse in oxhide, lead directly into important matters of belief and ritual. 182 231

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

maker's dance seen at Ngongo, a village of Ngalangi in east-central Angola, will be described in dealing with the *ocimbanda* (chapter IX). 821

No man thinks that the course of the sun can be altered, but there seems to be a hope that the setting of the sun may be delayed. A man who is likely to be overtaken by darkness breaks a piece from an ant hill. This fragment is placed in the forked branch of a tree while the supplicant says, "Sun, wait a little while for me." (786)

Months are reckoned by observation of the moon. The new moon is *osai* ("moon") *yokaliye* ("new"). There is no word for half moon. The phrase for full moon is *osai ya tunga ohumba*. *Ohumba* means "basket"; therefore the idea appears to be that the full moon is round like the big basket used for field work.

A star is called *olumbungululu*. To describe a shooting star, the word *luenda* ("it goes") is added. The large bright morning star is *tanda*. Another bright star is *tielele*. Three bright stars in a line are the hunter, the dog, and the quarry. The three stars are *ukongo* ("hunter"), *lombua* ("the dog"), *locinyama* ("the animal").

An eclipse of the sun is *uteke vutanya*. The former word means "night," the latter word means "daylight." Hence the meaning is "night in daylight."

Small mammals are captured in cane traps or stunned with blunt wooden arrows. The pursuit of such animals is a pastime for boys who thereby receive their early training in hunting. Rats are used as food after being boiled and roasted. This fact accounts for interest in the following small mammals. 224 825 [262]

Umbili. This is a big black river rat, the largest of the water rats.

Ocifelefele. A big gray water rat (*Cricetomys?*), not so large as *umbili*.

Kaleñe. A river rat something like the preceding one in appearance. *Kaleñe* can stay in the water for a longer period than that endured by *ocifelefele*.

Epeke. This is a bush rat which is light gray in color.

Kholonjonjó. This rat stays in the bush. It builds a nest in an ant hill from which it comes out only at night. The color is gray.

Elima (*Epomophorus*). This is the name given to the fruit bat. The word *elima* means "not one thing and not another." Thus *elima* is the word applied to a mulatto; he is not a Negro, not a white man.

Ovili (*Rhabdomys*). This is a large light brown mouse having white stripes on his back.

Ongenge. A mouse.

Epenge. A black rat.

Ocipili. A mouse with a long thin nose, probably a shrew.

Ovinge. This is a very fat mouse.

Nakalongaka. This very small mouse makes a hole around which he piles grass to conceal the entrance.

Onjombeloke (*Lemniscomys*). A mouse with a stripe on his back.

Kandoti (*Dendromus*). A very little mouse something like *nakalongaka*.

224 874 an initiation feast when the training is ended. At the feast all people of the village may be present but they do not dance; only the professional hunters may do so. The boy who is to be initiated must not speak or move until he "feels the spirit on his head"; then he gives meat to the people. After hunters have captured game for the feast, the blood from these animals is used to smear over the bow, arrows, and spear which have been made for the novice by his tutor. [326] This is analogous to the initiation of the young blacksmith who receives blood-sprinkled tools made by the master blacksmith.

224 788 There is in connection with the life and death of the professional hunter a certain amount of ritual and precaution. The night before setting out to hunt is a time of dancing and renewal of the implements of the chase, which are kept in a house specially prepared for them. A hunter who is on the eve of departure calls in other professional hunters to share the ceremony, which includes the rubbing of the bows and other implements with palm oil. A libation of beer is poured on the bows, spears, and arrows, but no medicine-man is present. Some of the bows are never used, because they are merely the symbols of the personality and prowess of dead hunters whose names they have taken. The food and cooking pots of a hunter must never be associated with those of ordinary household use. If a hunter is following the tracks of an animal he must not point with his finger as this action will drive the animal away. The correct way to point is by use of the feathered end of an arrow. The hunter [illegible] must not sleep with his wife the night before setting out in quest of game.

224 782 I have frequently seen in front of the hut of a hunter a number of skulls of antelope and other animals mounted on poles arranged in circular formation (Plate XXXII, Fig. 2). These skulls seem to be trophies, which are invariably taken away by the hunter if he finds a new home. There is no reason to doubt the statement that these skulls are an offering to the spirits who give good luck in hunting, because such a belief would be in harmony with the general respect for ancestral ghosts, which are thought to influence the affairs of the living.

764 224 On several occasions, notably near Ganda and in the Casonge country, I have seen the tombs of hunters. These are large structures built of slabs of granite laid with some symmetry. The rock tomb is invariably placed on the top of a commanding eminence of granite. The skulls of animals which the hunter has killed are piled on the top of the cairn, but I do not know whether these are the trophies

235 guese for a long period. The chicken is highly esteemed as a sacrificial
[244] animal, but it could not be said that the flesh is in common use. This failure to develop and utilize to the full, again raises the point of social custom and economic habit. Chickens are cared for, as may be seen in the way they are cooped at night. Sometimes a hen may be seen sitting on her clutch of eggs in a dark corner of a hut, unmolested by people and dogs; yet it is certain that there is no concentration on the rearing of poultry.

Eggs are laid, and chickens are hatched throughout the year, except in the months of November and December when corn supplies
[262] [264] are at their lowest ebb. Eggs are boiled, or fried on a fragment of pottery, but they are not sucked.

231 The domestic cat is not raised by the Ovimbundu. Wild cats are common, but there is no evidence of their domestication. Small birds and monkeys are sometimes kept as pets.

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

438 Caravan trade, which was at one time an important factor of tribal life, is now confined to short journeys for transporting corn, beans, and beeswax to traders' stores. But in spite of present-day
439 decline of transportation the memory of more prosperous times still exists.

Names of distant places survive in the Umbundu language; thus Tanganyika is called Nakandundu, while the name for far eastern Angola is Muacimbundu, the name of a one-time important chief. The Umbundu language is understood in all parts of Angola, far away from typical Umbundu centers of culture.

484 In the old days there were professional leaders of caravans, and a
788 ceremony was conducted before starting. The medicine-man and the
778 village chief were the principal performers in a rite which consisted
787 of bringing from its box the head of a former chief, sewn in oxhide. An animal was sacrificed so that the blood could be used for sprinkling on the chief's head, and on some occasions of this kind the head was sewn up in a new piece of oxhide. Direct appeal was made to the preserved head by the reigning chief, who asked for good fortune on the journey.

The medicine-man who accompanied a caravan carried with him a female wooden figure decorated with feathers (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). When a branching of the paths gave rise to doubts concerning the correct way the wooden figure was consulted by the medicine-man.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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priateness of certain tasks for males and females respectively, and individuals reflect these attitudes in their ideas and conduct.

My interpreter and others who were questioned laughed at the idea that men and women might interchange their occupations in the course of house-building. A woman collects wood for fuel, but not for house-building. Structural work is in the hands of men who dig the foundations, erect the poles, tie the crosspieces and add the roof. Women carry water for mixing the clay which is puddled by children; men, women, and children apply wet clay to the wattle walls. "Suppose a man should carry water?" I asked. "He would be laughed at and people would say that he was a he-woman," came the ready answer.

Women invariably make pottery among the Ovimbundu, but this is not always so in Negro tribes. Women of the Ovimbundu are likewise basket-makers, but they do not make mats, for this occupation is considered suitable for men only. Only women pound corn; before daybreak the heavy wooden pestles are at work and until sunset the rocks reserved for this operation are the centers of female activity, which includes singing and gossip. Only men herd cattle and only males are hunters. Women and children are the collectors of wild fruits and caterpillars, but only men take honey from the hives.

Agriculture and the preparation of food are entirely in the hands of the women. Men never eat with women; the latter have to carry the prepared food to the men's communal house in the middle of the village. Both men and women catch fish, but there are methods appropriate for each sex. There is a sex-division of labor without any implication of the inferiority of women.

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Occupations cannot be studied merely in a formal way, for, although the tasks are performed every day, a ceremonial element is involved. A clay pit is consecrated by the killing of a fowl; so also is the rock which is used as a base for pounding grain. The young blacksmith is initiated after two years of apprenticeship. On this occasion a dog is killed with the hammer which the master made for his pupil and the blood of the sacrificed animal is sprinkled on the tools. The remainder of the ritual and belief has been described in connection with occupations of the Ovimbundu. Study of the blacksmith's work was begun as research in technology; but failure to purchase the large hammer, even for a tempting sum, led to the discovery of considerable ritual.

Abstention from sexual relationships is enjoined on men and women who are going fishing. That copulation would induce the

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

fish to stay together at the bottom of the river, is the reason alleged for this taboo. A young hunter is ceremonially initiated. Throughout his life he has to make sacrifice to the ancestral spirits of hunters who are in the house where bows of famous hunters are kept; these ceremonies must be performed before a hunter leaves for the chase. A caravan is a commercial undertaking, but, before setting out, the head of a dead chief is asked for a guarantee of success; meanwhile a sacrifice is made by a medicine-man. A wooden image, when consulted by the medicine-man, indicates the correct caravan route. These instances illustrate a blending of the sacred and the profane in occupations.

Sexual relationships among the Ovimbundu form a basis of social life, as they do in all communities, but the sexual aspect is not all-pervading and completely dominant.

In early years children separate during play. Boys play games of hunting and warfare, enter into competition with bows and arrows, or amuse themselves with wood-carving. Girls find amusement in imitating their mothers in the occupations of making pottery and baskets, and in cultivating the fields. The small sums of money which a girl derives from the sale of produce from her own corn patch are personal property which she usually spends on trinkets and palm oil. This measure of economic independence, combined with considerable freedom of choice in marriage, indicates an individuality that has not been generally recognized.

I have mentioned among the Ovimbundu a system of friendship between boys and girls of from twelve to sixteen years, which permits the children to sleep together in the home of one of the girls in whose house the early evening has been spent. Cohabitation is forbidden, and pregnancy would be a disgrace. The practice is not unlike that of night visits by a lover in certain European countries during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (W. Goodsell, A History of the Family as a Social and Educational Institution, p. 365). Clearly sex is a factor that plays its part as a formative influence from infancy onward, until final emphasis of sex dichotomy is made by tribal initiations.

The social position of woman may be considered by selecting a few points from the data relating to courtship, marriage, and divorce. Marriages are sometimes arranged during infancy, but this does not invalidate the previous statement that considerable freedom of choice is allowed; a girl is not compelled to follow arrangements made during her childhood. A bride has to make contributions toward the